

31 Days to a Healthier You: A Delaware Social Media Campaign; Small Steps Can Lead to Big Rewards for Your Health

NEW CASTLE (Dec. 28, 2012) – Small steps toward good health can lead to big rewards. Building healthy habits often starts with small ideas about the changes you want to accomplish, a commitment to make those changes and, sometimes, a social connection to keep you going. To help promote a healthier Delaware, the Department of Health and Social Services, in connection with the Governor's Office and the YMCA of Delaware, will kick off a social media campaign on Jan. 1 called "31 Days to a Healthier You."

Gov. Jack Markell, DHSS Secretary Rita Landgraf, Delaware Public Health Director Dr. Karyl Rattay and YMCA President/CEO Michael Graves will mark the campaign with a press event at 10 a.m. Jan. 2 at the Downtown Central YMCA in Wilmington.

Each day using Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, flickr, Instagram or YouTube, "31 Days to a Healthier You" will offer fitness/activity ideas, nutritional information and healthy recipes, advice on how to quit smoking, tips on health screenings and more. The campaign will share links to information, photos, how-to videos and contact information, all using the hashtag #healthDE. The goal is to provide quick and easy-to-implement small steps that are both practical and will make a real difference in people's lives.

"What a great way to start the New Year," Gov. Markell said. "Every year around Jan. 1, we collectively think about

healthier habits we can embrace. This campaign offers Delawareans the opportunity to start 2013 with good advice for making small lifestyle changes that will lead to lasting differences in their lives. Plus, it encourages all of us to support one another. We hope you share this campaign with your family, your co-workers or your fellow students.”

Across the state, Delaware is starting to see improvement in some key health indicators. The prevalence of cigarette smoking among Delaware’s adults is among the lowest levels since the Division of Public Health began collecting data in 1982. And in the past 10 years, the rate of cardiovascular deaths dropped from 331.4 to 258.1 deaths per 100,000 population. Many challenges remain. While the obesity rates for children and adults appear to be leveling off, too many people remain at an unhealthy weight. Other indicators continue to rise. The state’s diabetes rate and the number of people who say they lead sedentary lives are still increasing. Small steps can make a big difference. For example, people at increased risk for type 2 diabetes can prevent or delay the disease’s onset by losing 5 percent to 7 percent of their body weight through increased physical activity and a reduced-fat and lower-calorie diet.

“Making small lifestyle changes can bring big rewards when it comes to your health,” Secretary Landgraf said. “Whatever the change you are embracing – making healthier food choices, being more physically active, quitting smoking or getting regular medical screenings – this campaign will give you ideas and connections. Because the campaign involves social media, we need the public’s interaction, too. As part of that connectedness, we’ll ask you to share photos that illustrate your small health changes or offer inspiration to others.”

On Facebook and Instagram, Delawareans will be encouraged to share their photos that answer this question: What does ‘Healthy’ look like?”



“Public Health is urging people to remember ‘5-2-1 Almost None,’ which means eating at least five servings of fruit or vegetables a day, watching no more than two hours of recreational screen time daily, being physically active for at least one hour a day and drinking almost no sugar-sweetened drinks,” said Dr. Rattay, director of DHSS’ Division of Public Health. “For example, drinking one less 12-ounce can of regular soda a day could save 15 pounds in a year. Pick the 5-2-1-Almost None goal you want to aim for and make a plan to take small steps to reach it.”

For the YMCA of Delaware, helping individuals build healthy lifestyle habits is a big part of its mission.

“The core of the YMCA of Delaware is healthy living, youth development and social responsibility, said Michael P. Graves, President of the YMCA of Delaware. “We know from experience that the beginning of the New Year is a time when people feel most optimistic and hopeful about changing behaviors and taking steps towards healthier living. The Y has programs and classes in place to help people reach their goals. We work at it 365 days a year so we are thrilled to be part of Delaware’s 31 Days to a Healthier You social media campaign.”

To join in or to follow 31 Days to a Healthier You, look for the hashtag #healthDE and go to:

Facebook: www.facebook.com/DelawareDHSS

or www.facebook.com/DEPublicHealth

Twitter: www.twitter.com/Delaware_DHSS

YouTube: www.youtube.com/DelDHSS

Flickr: www.flickr.com/deldhss

Pinterest: www.pinterest.com/dhss

Instagram: www.instagram.com/deldhss

YMCA of Delaware: www.ymcade.org

Delaware.gov: www.delaware.gov

Photos are on the Governor's [Flickr](#) page.